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NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY

JOINT FORCES STAFF COLLEGE

JOINT ADVANCED WARFIGHTING SCHOOL



CHINA'S COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

Refining the U.S. Targeting Process to Inform U.S. Strategy
by

Jarrold W. Stoutenborough
Lieutenant Colonel, USMC

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CHINA'S COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH: REFINING THE U.S. TARGETING
PROCESS TO INFORM U.S. STRATEGY


By
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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense. This paper is entirely my own work except as documented in footnotes.

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Abstract

The multitude of unpredictable challenges to U.S. interests across the globe complicate the development of coherent strategies that effectively address potential threats to security and stability. Recent efforts to globally integrate the effects of U.S. national planning offer a way-ahead that must be reinforced by an increased synchronization of all U.S. national instruments of power at the operational level. A refined application of the existing Joint Targeting Process provides Geographic Combatant Commanders with an increased capability to inform their own strategy development efforts, as well as those at the national level. China's comprehensive application of its national instruments of power in support of its strategic interests provides an effective model to implement at the U.S. operational level. Today's resource constrained environment demands efficiencies gained by opening the aperture of who conducts targeting, and operational targeting of Chinese strategy will yield more informed U.S. strategic targeting and strategy development efforts.

Dedicated to Cindy. Thank you for encouragement and wisdom to know how much I would enjoy this journey. Thanks to Professor Rodearmel and Colonel Smith for always making the time to listen, provide in-depth analysis, and offer recommendations that enhanced this experience.

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Introduction

During the Cold War era, Soviet and U.S. strategy development efforts focused on their clearly established, respective adversaries. Widely recognized as a victory for Democracy, the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 eliminated the bi-polar world and left the U.S. as the global superpower with unprecedented responsibilities regarding the maintenance of security and stability.¹ The fall of the Soviet Union led to the disintegration of a synchronized U.S. strategy, complicated by the multipolar complexities associated with political, economic, and technological changes, and the resurgence of nationalism once moderated by the Soviet influence.² Further, the lack of a clear national policy disrupted the delicate balance of art and science associated with strategy development efforts while atrophying in U.S. strategic targeting efforts. Strategic planners now face a multitude of unpredictable threats with the potential to disrupt global stability that amplifies the requirement to develop strategies aimed at avoiding catastrophic wars between a growing number of nuclear powers.³

Strategy, defined as the bridge that relates military power to political purpose, is inherently hard due to the complexity of today's international system and the challenge of developing strategic planners that understand the full range of military and political factors.⁴ While strategy is focused on the military instrument of national power, grand

¹ Henry Kissinger, *World Order* (New York: Penguin Press, 2014), 277,315.

² Judith Kornberg and John R. Faust, *China in World Politics: Policies, Processes, Prospects* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishing, 2005), 17.

³ Williamson Murray, *America and the Future of War: The Past as Prologue* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 2017) 72; Harry R. Yarger, *Strategic Theory for the 21st Century: The Little Book on Big Strategy*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College (Carlisle, PA, 2006), 1.

⁴ Colin Gray, *Fighting Talk: Forty Maxims on War, Peace, and Strategy* (Westport, CT: Potomac Books, Inc, 2007), 48.

strategy is the bridge that utilizes all relevant instruments of power as a threat or action to meet political objectives. Grand strategy in the Cold War addressed the clear purpose of containing Communism through the U.S. version of political warfare, defined as “the employment of all the means at a nation’s command, short of war, to achieve its national objectives.”⁵ A requirement to effectively address today’s global challenges, the development of an effective grand strategy is derived from a constant dialogue between policy and strategy. While there certainly are strengths of the U.S. government, the magnitude of the bureaucratic complexity challenges the necessary communication. Conversely, China’s strategy development within its communist governmental structure provides an example of grand strategy designed to facilitate a desired global stability and further China’s national interests and objectives through the comprehensive application of the instruments of national power.

No longer bounded by U.S./Soviet relations, and in some cases bolstered by U.S. partnership efforts, China established and fulfilled its own roles in world affairs in the post-Cold War era by placing expanded emphasis on the development of comprehensive national power policies.⁶ China’s development of its own synchronized global strategies, aimed at achieving a peaceful rise to global prominence, created tension with the U.S. global position, and aimed directly at developing strategies countering U.S. influence in the Pacific region.⁷ The rise of nations, such as China, with the ability to develop national

⁵ Max Boot and Michael Doran, “Political Warfare,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, June 2013, Policy Innovation Memorandum No. 33, <http://www.cfr.org/wars-and-warfare/political-warfare/p30894> (accessed 1 Feb 2018).

⁶ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 168; Zhiqun Zhu, *China’s New Diplomacy: Rationale, Strategies and Significance* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2010), 13.

⁷ Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999), 717.

policies that maximized the strategic benefits of its national instruments of power, magnified the U.S. requirement to leverage its national assets to achieve the benefits expected from its worldwide diplomatic and military presence.⁸

Understanding how China links its policy and strategy efforts through a comprehensive application of national power will increase U.S. strategists' understanding of a key competitor's actions and inform U.S. strategic responses that consider the environmental tensions associated with the U.S./China relationship. China's ability to conduct comprehensive operational targeting that informs their strategic efforts allows them to adhere to a long-term strategy while adjusting to changes in the environment. This flexibility has facilitated China's rise as a world power and must be matched by U.S. targeting efforts that inform strategy to ensure the Chinese growth isn't at the expense of U.S. national interests.

As a Commander-driven process, the 6-step, deliberate joint targeting cycle provides each GCC with a method to effectively integrate all lethal and non-lethal elements of U.S. national power to produce more synchronization regarding strategy development efforts.⁹ While targeting is commonly associated with the lethal and non-lethal delivery of munitions, the process is also, and perhaps more importantly, designed to support strategic objectives aimed at preventing an escalation to combat conditions. Discussed in detail later, the implementation of all available resources to achieve targeting objectives in support of current planning and strategy development efforts will require early and continuous integration of resources outside of the current GCC

⁸ Huntington, 135.

⁹ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Targeting*, Joint Publication 3-60 (Washington DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, January 31, 2013), II-1-II-36.

structure. This expansion of the current targeting process requires some education and cultural flexibility but working through the challenges associated with the refinement will provide insight into the strategies of other nations while maximizing the effectiveness of GCC and Department of State (DoS) capabilities throughout the world. While not politically acceptable to say the U.S. is “targeting” China, China’s political warfare objectives are effectively *targeting* U.S. interests worldwide and particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.¹⁰

Targeting, defined as the “process of selecting and prioritizing targets and matching the appropriate response to them, considering operational requirements and capabilities” provides a means of synchronization and integration of the diplomatic, information, military, and economic (DIME) instruments of power, as well as an ability to develop assessment criteria that identify measurable indicators of success and failure directly tied to the goals of strategic objectives.¹¹ China’s current political warfare strategy provides a refined example of how the current U.S. targeting process can more effectively synchronize the DIME elements of power through the implementation of a whole of government strategy. Further, the utilization of the existing targeting process provides more discernable information regarding China’s strategy development, a more complete understanding of how to apply all instruments of power, and how to develop strategy that effectively counters China’s political warfare techniques.

To serve as the leading contributor to global order while protecting its vital security interests, the U.S. must continue to refine its policy and doctrine covering all

¹⁰ Boot and Doran, 1.

¹¹ Joint Publication 3-60, vii.

domains with the intent of leveraging the synchronization of all elements of DIME.¹² Due to a very hierarchical organizational structure within the lead agencies for each instrument of power, the quest for synergy often comes up short. The U.S. is often outpaced by governments, such as China, that have the ability to centrally control their policy and strategy development. Currently, Xi Jinping serves as the General Secretary of the Communist Party, the President of the People's Republic of China (PRC), and the Chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC).¹³ This position of power greatly enhances China's ability to synchronize all its planning and implementation activities through one voice. Further, it facilitates China's method of political warfare and allows it to effectively leverage its political and economic functions to achieve its national objectives.¹⁴ Due to the U.S. governmental structure and a disparate application of its elements of power during an extended war against terrorism, the worldwide posturing of its DIME instruments often has not resulted in synchronized strategy development efforts. While synchronization at the U.S. national level remains a focus of policy and strategy development efforts, the GCCs possess enough structural similarities with the PRC to use many aspects of the Chinese comprehensive approach to refine their respective contributions to U.S. national efforts at regional levels.

The U.S. national security apparatus already contains a process that provides a mechanism to achieve that refinement at the GCCs.¹⁵ The existing Joint Targeting

¹² U.S. President, National Security Strategy (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, February 2015), 1-29.

¹³ Steven Mosher, *Bully of Asia: Why China's Dream Is the New Threat to World Order* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 2017), 171.

¹⁴ Ye Zicheng, *Inside China's Grand Strategy: The Perspective from the People's Republic* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2011), 38; Max Boot and Michael Doran, "Political Warfare."

¹⁵ Joint Publication 3-60, II-1-36.

Process provides the centralized control and flexibility to efficiently and effectively implement strategic thought into operational activity.¹⁶

The U.S. and Chinese response to the end of the Cold War presents critical challenges for U.S. policy and strategy development. To protect its global interests, the U.S. will likely maintain its GCC and Embassy structure throughout the world, and that will reinforce the enduring nature of the friction inherent in its relationship with China. Through the development of theater specific strategies guided by U.S. national strategies, current PACOM strategy development efforts are aimed at supporting U.S. national interests in the Asia-Pacific. The posture and activity required to support the PACOM theater objectives continue to fuel China's anti-U.S. sentiment, as well as the development of long-term strategies focused on replacing the U.S. as the global hegemon.¹⁷ If U.S. strategy development efforts continue to be outpaced by the centralized, political warfare efforts of China, peacetime opportunities to effectively counter Chinese objectives will be lost, leading to the realization of China's hegemonic goals. Additionally, remaining in a reactive mode to Chinese activities will limit the U.S. ability to effectively assess and exploit potential vulnerabilities associated with China's political warfare techniques. While China's autocracy creates unity of effort advantages that are difficult to offset, opportunities to integrate many of China's comprehensive targeting methods exist within the current GCC structure. This paper will use China's comprehensive application of national power as a guide to the refinement of existing U.S.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Mosher, 23.

targeting methodologies and demonstrate how the U.S. can effectively counter the realization of China's strategic objectives by operationalizing its own strategy.

Method:

China's use of political warfare contributes to its effective development and application of a comprehensive, or whole of government (WOG), targeting effort against the United States to realize objectives associated with its long-term strategy. The paper's analysis of the Chinese comprehensive targeting methodology will lead to increased methods of understanding their long-term objectives and contribute to a more effective defense against Chinese long-term policy development and implementation efforts. This paper demonstrates how the U.S. can reduce the Chinese advantage through the employment of U.S. targeting efforts that are synchronized across all elements of national power.

An extensive review of the literature on Chinese national policy development and implementation efforts revealed how China uses its comprehensive national power in support of their broader long-term strategy. The Chinese approach was assessed using DIME to provide a framework for interpreting and understanding the process. Furthermore, the elements of DIME serve as indicators of national level Chinese targeting and demonstrate how these trends are effectively synchronized with other Chinese policies. The research efforts led to proposals to develop better measures of effectiveness for existing U.S. targeting efforts and establishment of targeting objectives that will effectively counter the Chinese long-term strategy. This paper analyzes these factors and recommends refinements to existing U.S. targeting methodologies to improve effect.

Chapter 2

China Background:

With about 20 percent of the world's population, a growing military power, and a prospering economy, China's role in today's multipolar world continues to increase.¹ Unlike the Soviet Union in the Cold War, China is not as open about its anti-U.S. sentiment. Even though U.S. "hegemonic intentions" are taught in Chinese schools, and Chinese strategists view the current U.S. hegemonic status as a waypoint to a China-led world, the PRC's ability to control access and mask its true intentions has led to false assumptions by U.S. strategists.² Two key false assumptions are that Chinese engagement with the U.S. and the global community equals cooperation and that China is ultimately evolving towards a Western-style Democracy.³ China's desire to become a world power in the twenty-first century is clear, but their vision of what that power position looks like remains unclear to most outside observers.⁴ One prevalent aspect of China's rise is that the U.S. is a main target that must be addressed to achieve China's position as the global superpower. U.S. strategy development efforts must continue to recognize China as a competitor and aspiring global power while working through the challenges associated with China's ambiguity and opaqueness regarding its strategic plans and ambitions.⁵

¹ Judith Kornberg and John R. Faust, *China in World Politics: Policies, Processes, Prospects* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishing, 2005), 17.

² Michael Pillsbury, *The Hundred-Year Marathon: China's Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2015), 99.

³ Ibid, 159.

⁴ Ye Zicheng, *Inside China's Grand Strategy: The Perspective from the People's Republic* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2011), 75.

⁵ Aaron Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia* (New York: W W Norton and Company, 2011), 120.

China's historical view on strategy greatly influences its government wide commitment to modern strategy development efforts while making strategic responses efforts by other nations more challenging. Exemplified by the Chinese game of *wei qi*, Chinese strategy objectives are aimed at achieving a "strategic encirclement" that ultimately yields a peaceful formulation of conditions in keeping with its "all under heaven" mandate that results in a peaceful world governed by the Chinese polity.⁶ Using lessons learned from the Warring States period to shape its view on potential aggressors, China follows the following nine main elements that serve as a foundation for its long-term strategy development: "1. Induce complacency to avoid alerting your opponent. 2. Manipulate your opponent's advisers. 3. Be patient-for decades, or longer- to achieve victory. 4. Steal your opponent's ideas and technology for strategic purposes. 5. Military might is not the critical factor for winning a long-term competition. 6. Recognize that the hegemon will take extreme, even reckless action to retain its dominant position. 7. Never lose sight of shi. 8. Establish and employ metrics for measuring your status relative to other potential challenges. 9. Always be vigilant to avoid being encircled or deceived by others."⁷ The first principle relies on Chinese military growth that is designed to not provoke military responses from the U.S. until conditions are established to make that response futile.⁸ This preference for peace, while not exclusive of military conflict, facilitates China's propensity to demand strategic coherence in its strategy development

⁶ Henry, Kissinger, *On China*, (New York: Penguin Press, 2011), 24; Mosher, xiii.

⁷ Pillsbury, 35-36.

⁸ Ibid, 35.

and execution efforts, and it is best defined as the effective balance of all ends, ways, and means through the effective integration of all instruments of power.⁹

Chinese scholars believe that comprehensive national power stems from the total strength of its population, natural resources, and the application of soft and hard power.¹⁰ While there are multiple views regarding the breakdown of this comprehensive approach, one most closely aligned with the U.S. DIME construct utilizes four elements. 1. *Basic power* focuses on the Chinese population, resources, and national cohesion. 2. *Economic power* is generated by leveraging the financial gains from Chinese industry, agriculture, science and technology, and business capacity. 3. *Defense power*, most aligned with the U.S. military instrument, focuses on strategic resources, technology, military, and nuclear power. 4. *Diplomatic power* encompasses Chinese approaches to foreign policy, international affairs, and its fundamental positions regarding global issues.¹¹ China's proficiency in this comprehensive application of its instruments of power is well served by the centralized nature of its governmental decision-making apparatus. Party control over each power instrument makes the integration more natural, and its ideals committed to "subtlety, indirection, and the patient accumulation of relative advantage" facilitates the exploration of all non-military options.¹² The U.S. will not and should not replicate China's centralized government structure, but further comparisons between the two nation's application of national power offers insight into how China prepares its military

⁹ General Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), 21.

¹⁰ Ye, 18.

¹¹ Ibid, 19.

¹² Kissinger, *On China*, 23.

to face potential adversaries while leveraging economic and diplomatic powers to shape relationships they can manage.

China/U.S. Relations:

Understanding China's relationship with the U.S. depends on the perspective of the scholar or analyst, and, while important for the development of U.S. policy and targeting objectives, a consensus does not have to be achieved to demonstrate how China is more effective in synchronizing its elements of power than the U.S. Whether one believes China is directly countering U.S. interests or that their "peaceful development" message will lead to a peaceful co-existence with the U.S., efforts must be made to assess their true intentions before it's too late to act.¹³ As discussed later in more detail, the GCC Commander's targeting process can facilitate the development of their own assessment and augment existing U.S. efforts to assess Chinese activities. First identified in the 2015 National Military Strategy, China is recognized as one of five (4 +1) threats to U.S. global security, but an adherence to Joseph Nye's smart power principles offers both friendly and adversarial methods to address the Chinese threat.¹⁴ In fact, the lack of a clearly defined status for China can be a catalyst for a stronger commitment to synchronizing all U.S. instruments of power in support of its strategy development.

China's ability to leverage its national power has led to a rapid rise in its global and regional status. This rise creates enduring tensions between the U.S. and China due to ideological divides between the U.S. Democracy and the Leninist Communist rule of China, with tensions likely to persist due to the CCP's refusal to develop any form of

¹³ Ye, 9.

¹⁴ U.S. Joint Chief of Staff. *National Military Strategy* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, February 2015), 1-29; Nye, 32.

democracy that doesn't safeguard the commitment to Party survival.¹⁵ That stated, the Chinese expansion of economic, diplomatic, and security interests throughout the world has generated potential entry points to U.S./China interdependence based on common interests. As the least likely area of reconciliation, the vital security interests of each nation must find some common ground to develop more common interests in other areas across the DIME spectrum between the two nations. For China, safeguarding its basic party system and national security, protecting its national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and maintaining sustained and stable economic and social development will always be the focus of its policy goals.¹⁶ Its comprehensive application of power in support of these political objectives has contributed greatly to China's ability to rise so rapidly on the world stage.

Chinese DIME:

The comprehensive application of power can also be referenced as a WOG approach. The U.S. Department of Defense defines WOG as an approach that “integrates the collaborative efforts of the departments and agencies of the U.S.G [United States Government] to achieve unity of effort. Under unified action, a WOG approach identifies combinations of the full range of available U.S.G capabilities and resources that reinforce progress and create synergies.”¹⁷ Another U.S. approach involves the use of the DIME instruments of U.S. power to maximize the effectiveness of its strategy. To achieve a common understanding and develop a model that can be implemented into an existing

¹⁵ Ye, 3.

¹⁶ Murray Scot Tanner and Peter W. Mackenzie, *China's Emerging National Security Interests: and their Impact on the People's Liberation Army*, (Arlington and Quantico, VA: CNA Corporation/Marine Corps University Press, 2015), 2.

¹⁷ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Interorganizational Coordination during Joint Operations*, Joint Publication 3-08 (Washington DC: The Joint Staff, 2004), p. xiii.

U.S. process, this paper will break down the Chinese comprehensive approach by providing examples of China's own DIME construct. This breakdown, while demonstrating how China maintains its focus on its core interests, will also depict how the PRC leadership controls each aspect to facilitate synchronization.

The Chinese diplomatic application focuses on the great power diplomacy, energy diplomacy, and public diplomacy to develop its own version of 'smart power'.¹⁸ Chinese application of smart power, such as its 2008 counter piracy efforts near the coast of Somalia and its expanding trade and investment in developing countries, remains focused on a "harmonious" environment throughout the world.¹⁹ Its traditional professed commitment to a "non-interference" foreign policy combined with a perception of military expansion has generated concerns regarding Chinese intentions in both the Asia-Pacific and worldwide due to opaque decision-making.²⁰ In an effort to offset those perceptions, China conducts its DIME integration utilizing both a top-down and bottom-up methodology to facilitate its image as a 'peacefully rising, responsible power.'²¹ The top-down approach utilizes the selective engagement of key PRC leaders with other world leaders and multinational organizations. The bottom-up approach relies upon the vast Chinese population to interact with other people throughout the world to reinforce China's quest for positive relations across the globe.²² China's diplomatic adherence to its core interests, combined with strategic messaging that reinforces its claims to

¹⁸ Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (Cambridge, Mass: PerseU.S. Books, 2004), 32.

¹⁹ Zhiqun, Zhu, *China's New Diplomacy: Rationale, Strategies and Significance* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2010), 17.

²⁰ Ibid, 38.

²¹ Ibid, 8,10.

²² Ibid, 10.

legitimacy as a regional hegemon in the Pacific, is designed to create the perception of “win-win” scenarios for all nations impacted by Chinese involvement.²³ The comprehensive application of China’s diplomatic efforts are best represented by its “one-way street” approach that defines the strength of its international relationships by how well the other country respects China’s core interests.²⁴ Additionally, China’s global diplomatic effort continues to grow through organizations such as the United Front Work Department, that is aimed at spreading the Chinese Communist nationalist movement across the globe creating a stronger Asian cultural identity.²⁵ These organizations effectively leverage the vast global population of the Chinese diaspora to form relationships with other nations while enhancing the worldwide spread of messaging generated by the PRC. This messaging effort is enhanced, for example, by the establishment of Confucius Institutes established around the world to spread the goodness of Chinese culture.²⁶ Widely recognized for his “benevolent” vision for the Chinese government, the deliberate use of the Confucius name supports the Chinese projection of a harmonious development to the rest of the world.²⁷ Chinese leveraging of its culture as a currency of soft power in support of its diplomatic efforts is enhanced by the PRC’s ability to promote its national policies through attempts to control the information that coincides with those efforts.²⁸

²³ Ibid, 193.

²⁴ Murray Scot Tanner and Peter W. Mackenzie, 25

²⁵ Steven, Mosher, *Bully of Asia: Why China’s Dream Is the New Threat to World Order* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 2017), 252, 255.

²⁶ Ibid, 250.

²⁷ Ibid, 250-256.

²⁸ Nye, 31.

The Chinese informational instrument of power is generated and controlled by the head of the PRC. Currently, Xi Jinping communicates his grand strategy of peaceful development as a world power through a very controlled party apparatus.²⁹ This message emphasizes a prosperous, strong, culturally diverse, and harmonious modern socialist state that maintains friendly relations with all countries.³⁰ In support of its core interests of party control over a stable society, stable economic growth, and defense of national unity and sovereignty, Beijing continually communicates a vision that supports diplomatic activities while striving to reduce the concerns over its increased military capability and posture.³¹ In addition to controlling the message outside of China, the PRC leadership maintains control of the message delivered to the Chinese people by dictating what is taught in schools, restricting what information is accessible through the internet and social media, and by controlling the state-sponsored delivery of news through regulated media outlets. While this control grows harder for the PRC due to increased public access to social media, the Party has maintained its ability to expose the population to messaging that reinforces its national objectives. Furthermore, the PRC nationalistic approach that highlights the unmatched history of China as a world power coupled with its clear objective to return China to that status, is reinforced through the PRC delivered messaging to its Chinese citizenry.³² This Chinese control of messaging supports its standard of international relations governed by political principles that demand mutual respect for sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's

²⁹ Ye, 9.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Scot Tanner Murray and Peter W. Mackenzie, 2.

³² Ye, 31.

internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit for all parties, and a peaceful coexistence.³³ Much like Chinese leaders that preceded him, Xi Jinping's message to the people of China and the world is to "make China Great Again", and this entails: 1. China's re-establishment as the Asian hegemon. 2. Chinese unification that includes control over the territories of "greater China" such as Xinjiang, Tibet, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. 3. Re-establishing its influence along its borders and adjacent waterways to earn the deference that comes with "great nation" status. 4. Respect by other great powers throughout the world.³⁴ These messages are reinforced by an expanded Chinese military capability aimed at achieving an expected deference to China on sensitive security issues throughout the globe.

Chinese security issues are at the forefront of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the relationship between the PRC and PLA. Due to the perceived threat to Chinese sovereignty created by the U.S. military presence in the Pacific region, China has increased spending on its military forces. While remaining focused on the security of its homeland, security challenges associated with its increased global presence have prompted an expanded PLA role. These emerging security interests are 1. Protecting overseas investments and Chinese working abroad, 2. Deepening energy and resource security, 3. Strengthening maritime security interests, 4. Stabilizing China's western borderland regions, 5. Developing space and cyberspace interests, and 6. Shaping China's security environment.³⁵ The expansion of Chinese security interests is only done in

³³ Judith Kornberg and John R. Faust, *China in World Politics: Policies, Processes, Prospects* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishing, 2005), 14.

³⁴ Graham Allison, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017), 109.

³⁵ Scot Tanner Murray and Peter W. Mackenzie, 25.

conjunction with the ‘peaceful development’ strategy through effectively leveraging its other elements of national power.³⁶ Without that comprehensive approach, the growing Chinese security posture would likely result in diplomatic tensions because of a perceived threat. Further, these tensions would be primed to escalate due to resistance to Chinese actions from other nations. China balances the elements of its comprehensive national power by endorsing this defense growth as a guarantee for its core interests of national security and drive for modernization while correlating it with the quest for economic development based on lessons learned from the fall of the Soviet Union.³⁷

China’s economic revival over the past forty years has made it possible to challenge the U.S. politically and militarily in East and South Asia due to its comprehensive application of national power.³⁸ China’s sustained economic growth, sparked by increased trade and the development of strategic interests beyond China’s borders, continues to provide leverage regarding its diplomatic, information, and military instruments of power.³⁹ As a foreign policy priority, Xi Jinping has directed the development of friendly, cooperative relations with other countries by making economic ties closer, improving communication, and encouraging trade that enhances monetary circulation by emphasizing a common heritage of commercial and intellectual exchange.⁴⁰ China’s economic expansion creates an increased demand for energy that supports China’s economic relationships with abhorrent regimes such as Sudan.⁴¹ During

³⁶ Ye, 9.

³⁷ Ibid, 14.

³⁸ Williamson Murray, *America and the Future of War: The Past as Prologue* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 2017) 194.

³⁹ Robert Kaplan, *Monsoon: The Indian Ocean and the Future of American Power* (New York: Random House, 2010), 279.

⁴⁰ Peter Frankopan, *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World* (New York: Alford A Knopf, 2016), 502.

⁴¹ Kaplan, 282.

these instances, the PRC demonstrates exploitable duplicity regarding its self-interests by prioritizing its economic growth while leveraging its adherence to its non-interference policy and highlighting how the economic instrument of power creates international opportunities to address critical resource shortfalls impacting the prosperity of its citizens. The Party's strength lies in its ability to govern and provide for its people, and its direct and indirect control over its global economic decisions strengthens that grip. Through PRC-led regional economic integration, China creates interdependent relationships that reinforce activities involving its other instruments of national power. Unlike the economic freedoms associated with a capitalist society, China's central regulation facilitates more synchronization of other Party led power instruments.

Centralized control of all Chinese instruments of national power resides within the Party leadership and the ability to develop and apply a comprehensive approach at the national level is facilitated by that autocratic structure. For example, Xi Jinping's ability to control the buildup of China's military capabilities and economic expansions designed to benefit the citizens of China, as well as controlling both the domestic and international message associated with those developments, supports diplomatic efforts that reinforce Chinese policy without provoking hostile responses from the U.S.⁴² While this lack of checks and balances provides China with substantial unity of effort advantages, the challenges associated with information control and the suppression of basic human rights create critical vulnerabilities that can be exploited by U.S. targeting efforts. The lack of an effective checks and balance system akin to the U.S. democratic system facilitates the Party leadership's ability to make political reforms that shape the influence and

⁴² Pillsbury, 212.

functionality of the lead DIME-related agencies within the Chinese government. A modern-day example is Xi Jinping's appointment of military leaders that support his policies to facilitate his capacity to maintain control over the military instrument of power. The efficiency gained by China's centralized structure carries the potential for effectiveness deficiencies due to the lack of comprehensive input into the strategic decision-making cycle. The PRC's steadfast commitment to continued Party rule, and the likelihood that the development of a western style Democracy will continue to be resisted by the Party, means that China will continue to utilize this centralized control to synchronize the effects of the diplomatic, information, military, and economic elements.⁴³

⁴³ Ibid, 182.

Chapter 3

Joint Targeting Process:

While the U.S. government system of checks and balances is designed to prohibit the centralized control demonstrated by China, the subject matter expertise required to generate a comprehensive approach like China's does exist. However, due to a vast, global focus, multiple parallel lines of command, and unlimited demands on the time of these experts, this synchronization is unlikely to occur at the national level. The GCCs provide a more regionally-focused application of expertise, but these commands are often faced with their own demands that pull that expertise in different directions resulting in a lack of synchronization. Fortunately, the GCCs have an existing targeting process that can be tailored to integrate many of the same considerations available to the Chinese government.¹ While the GCC will not have control over economic, informational, and diplomatic instruments of national power, the existing targeting process is designed to adapt to direction from national levels and facilitate efforts in a supporting role. Additionally, this process is Commander-driven, and can be adapted to assume many of the same centralized characteristics that exist within the Chinese government.

Ideally suited to adapt to the current operating environment, the targeting process provides the GCC Commander with a mechanism to input their intent and guidance into the established battle rhythm. The joint targeting cycle is a six-phase process with a framework that supports both deliberate (planned) and dynamic (targets of opportunity)

¹ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Targeting*. Joint Publication 3-60 (Washington DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, January 31, 2013), II-3.

targeting, and it is designed to support current and future planning efforts within the GCC.² The targeting process is driven by the establishment of targeting objectives that are developed in support of the GCC Commander's Theater Strategy on how to support U.S. national security interests in their respective regions. Traditionally, this process is facilitated by military planners and utilized during the conduct of combat operations with an emphasis on the delivery of lethal munitions. Since the process resides within a military command, and the main question being asked is "how can we (the military) support the specified political objectives?", the process often yields a limited perspective regarding the assets available to the Commander. This lens must be expanded to include all elements of national power and asking a different question is a good start. I recommend "how can the strategic bridge that connects these political objectives with our military objectives be strengthened by the employment of all available U.S. assets?". This will force the targeting professionals to consider all the assets available to them in their respective area of operations (AO). Expanding the focus regarding assets available must include a pre-combat focus that uses the targeting process daily to establish conditions that prevent conflict, which is normally a foundation of U.S. national policy.

Targeting is effects and assessments based, so the integration of professionals who are well versed on both global and theater strategic objectives and the desired end states associated with them are critical to agree upon the correct answer to the question above.³ As will be described in detail later, each assessment provided should drive a well informed decision by the Commander, and this requires the integration of expert analysis

² Ibid.

³ Ibid, II-14.

regarding the potential effects of each DIME instrument within the existing process. There can be an apprehension for non-military personnel to participate in the targeting process due to the lethal perception associated with the word targeting. Any suggestion that their associates, or China, are targets, can create barriers to the desired comprehensive approach. It's critical to remind all potential participants that the targeting process is most effectively used to determine who and/or what needs to be influenced and what instruments of national power can best accomplish the effects required to support national objectives. To stay on pace with Xi Jinping and his strategy developers, the personnel involved in the GCC targeting process must reduce, if not eliminate, this barrier created by this terminology. The link to national objectives can entice more participation and integration from expertise outside of the GCC and competing requirements will require a more dedicated synchronization effort to ensure all departments and agencies are creating effects in support of shared national interests. With time as a limiting factor, the flexible, iterative nature of the targeting process allows subject matter experts to execute their demanding primary duties while also providing critical input to the six-phase targeting process. While certain phases of the targeting process are more transferrable than others, each of the six phases provides the GCC Commander with existing entry points to influence the realization of their strategy.

The first phase of the Joint Targeting Cycle focuses on the Commander's desired endstate and objectives that serve as the guidance and impetus for the entire process. Normally focused on their military endstate, the Commander also provides their vision to achieve related strategic objectives. Current doctrine is very focused on military objectives, and that is understandable due to the current authority of the Geographic

Combatant Commanders. Using China as a guide, the GCC targeting sections can use this phase to expand the perspective and identify the required expertise not resident on the GCC staff. For example, with the inclusion of the required SMEs in its AO, PACOM's targeting process can more effectively synchronize potential opportunities associated with the North Korean nuclear activities, the China/India relationship, the South China Sea, and China/Taiwan relations. It is widely accepted that non-lethal activities exist within each DIME instrument, but the current structure cannot effectively synchronize the effects of those activities without the correct SMEs who possess or have access to the authorities required to develop a truly comprehensive targeting solution. Further, limiting the scope to a military one during this phase will have a restraining impact on the targeting effect throughout the process. The JP 3-60 states that "the ability to generate the type and extent of effects necessary to achieve the commander's objectives distinguishes effective targeting "and the expansion of those objectives to include desired diplomatic, informational, and economic effects will facilitate increased synchronization between all DIME elements throughout the GCC strategy development and planning efforts.⁴ The targeting process is not only designed to facilitate that synchronization, it is designed to test measures of effectiveness (MOEs) and measures of performance (MOPs) to ensure that targeting activities are yielding results trending towards the Commander's objectives.⁵ With only a military focus, these measurements will lack critical input from SMEs focused on their respective contribution to national efforts. Additionally, the representation of each DIME instrument will provide more comprehensive feedback to facilitate in-stride refinements to adapt to the dynamic nature

⁴ Ibid, II-5.

⁵ Ibid.

of the current operating environment. With the end state and commander's objectives effectively communicated to representatives from each DIME instrument, and their respective considerations implemented within the targeting process, a more comprehensive approach to target development and prioritization can occur.

Phase 2 of the Joint Targeting Process is focused on the development of targets and prioritizing their impact on potential adversary's ability to conduct combat operations.⁶ Once you work through the use of "target" discussed earlier, the first refinement requires the coverage of all peacetime activities that influence the operating environment. The Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment (JIPOE), already provides a methodology to analyze systemic connections between an adversary's functional capabilities, and integration of all DIME elements into this process will enhance the strategic utility of those connections.⁷ Most military planners and targeteers do not possess the required expertise to assess non-military targets based on the factors depicted in the below table.⁸

Factors in Target Evaluation Within a Target System Analysis	
Criticality	Vulnerability
Value	Cushion
Depth	Reserves
Recuperation	Dispersion
Capacity	Mobility
	Countermeasures
	Physical Characteristics
Figure II-6, JP-60	

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid, II-6.

⁸ Ibid, II-9.

For example, by using an expanded JIPOE to analyze China's political warfare approach, the expansion of the existing process will facilitate more in-depth analysis of the Chinese intent behind their activities in the South China Sea, identification of the connections of their actions across their national instruments of power, and the criticality and vulnerability of the designated target areas derived from that analysis. Already challenged with assessing the true intent of the Chinese government due to its opaqueness and deception, a more comprehensive approach to target development and prioritization will increase the GCC's capacity to match its targeting objectives with U.S. national objectives that facilitate continued prominence in the Pacific.⁹ Another conduit to this critical linkage is the application of all available U.S. assets to effectively address vetted targets.

Phase 3 of the Joint Targeting Process evaluates all the Commander's available capabilities to "engage" the targets identified through the first two phases.¹⁰ This phase is designed to maximize the most efficient use of available forces to create effects desired by the Commander. The inclusion of non-military DIME elements will facilitate more global synchronization of desired effects and likely increase resources available to the GCC Commander. The existing Joint Targeting Process already includes both a feasibility and effects estimate that accounts for targets that cannot be addressed and potential 2nd and 3rd order effects of those that can be addressed.¹¹ A comprehensive approach to targeting will force targeteers to account for national policy objectives and the effects created throughout the linkages discussed in Phase 2; yielding even more

⁹ Michael Pillsbury, *The Hundred-Year Marathon: China's Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2015), 4.

¹⁰ JP 3-60, II-13.

¹¹ Ibid.

efficiency and coverage of potential gaps in the GCC seams. The JP 3-60 already states that “inclusion of interagency capabilities may be leveraged to create more powerful, comprehensive, and enduring results” so only minimal refinements are required to align GCC targeting efforts with national strategic objectives. Additionally, a peacetime targeting focus can help the GCC Commander effectively leverage national level assets to shape conditions within their OE while simultaneously gaining more fidelity on the intentions of key actors in their respective region. For example, China’s regional actions that contradict its professed “noninterference” policy by increasing political pressure on its neighbors provides potential for PACOM targeteers to synchronize all U.S. DIME activities to further leverage Key Leader Engagement (KLE) opportunities to discredit the legitimacy of Chinese informational and diplomatic efforts while supporting GCC targeting objectives.¹² In addition to countering the Chinese message, the GCC can replace it with one that reinforces the benevolence normally associated with U.S. partnerships. Expanding the scopes of guidance, potential targets, and the resources available to address them require the commander’s approval prior to execution.

Phase 4 of the Joint Targeting Process provides a link between the planning efforts and the creation of operation orders to facilitate action.¹³ Each targeting decision and force assignment decision will be linked to desired effects in support of the GCC’s operational objectives. Already designed to synchronize the efforts of targeteers and planners to ensure the available employment options are balanced with the expected effects, the inclusion of other DIME expertise; enhanced by the GCC Commander’s

¹² Murray Scot Tanner and Peter W. Mackenzie, *China’s Emerging National Security Interests: and their Impact on the People’s Liberation Army*, (Arlington and Quantico, VA: CNA Corporation/Marine Corps University Press, 2015), 68.

¹³ JP 3-60, II-13.

strategic perspective, will yield more effective approval decision and sourcing solutions closely aligned with strategy development efforts. Enhanced by the GCC Commander's influence and reach back to U.S. national leadership, these efforts will also contribute to a more comprehensive U.S. targeting effort across the globe. Additionally, the comprehensive inclusion of all DIME expertise will enhance the holistic analysis resulting from existing procedures such as Capabilities Analysis and Collateral Damage Estimation prior to presenting the draft Joint Integrated Prioritized Target List (JIPTL) to the Commander for decision.¹⁴ The GCC Commander's control and oversight over the Joint Targeting Process and their ability to influence the level of discussion throughout the process is authoritative in nature, and the control inherent within the existing process can produce focused targeting efforts much like China's Xi Jinping. Further, a more comprehensive, peacetime approach to Phase 4 can enhance global synchronization efforts during planning and execution efforts as a result.

The Phase 5 focus on mission planning and force execution facilitates the ability to achieve the operational objectives provided by the GCC.¹⁵ In response to the unpredictable nature of operations within the OE, this phase includes a dynamic targeting methodology comprised of the find, fix, track, target, engage, assess (F2T2EA) steps designed to respond to changes associated with conducted targeting activities.¹⁶ Through a comprehensive approach to targeting, the commander can utilize this phase to provide subordinate commanders with targeting guidance that is synchronized with their strategic vision while facilitating timely responses to emerging threats and/or opportunities

¹⁴ Ibid, II-19.

¹⁵ Ibid, II-22.

¹⁶ Ibid, II-23.

utilizing all national elements of power. Additionally, using environmental estimate models that assess the political, military, economic, social, infrastructure, information, physical environment, and time (PMESII-PT) factors, the SME input from all DIME experts can provide timely answers to the questions: *What are we doing? How are we doing it? and, Are we doing the right things?*¹⁷ A comprehensive, peace time approach to this phase will be challenged by the combat focus in the current doctrine, but the change in approach outlined in the previous four phases can facilitate responses and assessments that can be integrated into planning and strategy development efforts to shape conditions for peace. The conditioning of the targeting community to look for contributions to and detractors from the desired conditions associated with strategic objectives can yield assessments that can be directly integrated into the existing targeting process.

Phase 6 of the Joint Targeting Process focuses on the continuous inputs from the first five phases to determine if the “ends, ways, and means” have resulted in effects contributing to the commander’s objectives.¹⁸ The targeting cycle allows for this assessment to inform the other phases, and the comprehensive application of the DIME instruments will facilitate in-stride refinements that reflect the expertise required to operationalize strategic objectives. Additionally, much like the Chinese government, the GCC Commander can assess the impact of individual instruments on the WOG approach and adjust their targeting guidance to facilitate more timely, comprehensive refinements to existing strategies. Even though some might argue that war between the U.S. and China is inevitable, many suggest that both the U.S. and China will do what it takes to

¹⁷ Jimmy A. Gomez, “The Targeting Process: D3A and F3EAD.” *Small Wars Journal*. July 2011, 3.

¹⁸ JP 3-60, II-31.

avoid creating conditions that lead to conflict.¹⁹ This phase can be used to identify those indications of perceived U.S./Chinese aggression that might lead to conflict in time to effectively reduce the tension.²⁰ Additionally, “China’s current activities, as well as the economic and political pressures the Communist Party’s leadership is already confronting, suggest that behavior over the coming decades will be anything but constructive.”²¹ Mirroring China’s comprehensive approach to targeting will offer insight into how to adjust these potentially disrupting activities to achieve the desired effect on Chinese activities.

Much like Xi Jinping’s direct influence in China, the GCC Commander directly influences how their targeting process is conducted but requires assistance from many SMEs outside of their chain of command. While limited by authorities outlined in the Unified Command Plan (UCP), the Commander’s direct connection to the U.S. national security apparatus can facilitate their receipt of comprehensive targeting assets and/or capabilities not resident in their GCC.²² Additionally, the questions asked by Commanders influence action, and the expansion of their targeting process will likely lead to questions resulting in more comprehensive thoughts and actions by their respective staffs and subordinate leaders. These thoughts and actions will reach targeteers that have the acumen to directly influence the output of the targeting process.

¹⁹ Arthur Waldron. “There Is No Thucydides Trap.” *supchina*. 12 June 2017, supchina.com/2017/06/12/no-thucydides-trap/ (accessed 1 Feb 2018).

²⁰ Graham Allison, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides’s Trap?* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017), 109.

²¹ Williamson Murray, *America and the Future of War: The Past as Prologue* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 2017), 198.

²² U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, Joint Publication 1 (Washington DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, July 12, 2017), Ch III.

This cycle will yield a greater network of personnel within the GCC who understand the linkage between daily targeting efforts and long-term strategy.

Chapter 4

Discussion:

The U.S. continues to be outpaced by China's ability to operationalize the intersection of its policy and strategy in spite of considerable global U.S. presence designed to deter potential challenges to global stability.¹ In order for the global projection of U.S. power to effectively shape the environment and provide timely responses to crises that directly impact U.S. and allied national security interests, more synchronization efforts at the operational level are required.² In order to effectively advance its national interests, the U.S. relies upon established relationships both within the Department of Defense (DoD) and between all agencies within the U.S.G.³ Utilizing the joint targeting process to develop these critical relationships at the operational level can inform the relationships at the strategic level and close the seams between GCCs, as well as U.S.G representatives, that impedes the development of synchronized strategy development efforts. Further, this operational effort facilitates more open communication between subject matter experts across the globe yielding a more effective application of U.S. smart power defined as the combination of soft and hard power.⁴

China also operationalizes its strategy through its projection of sharp power, defined by its reliance on 'subversion, bullying and pressure, which combine to promote

¹ Williamson Murray, *America and the Future of War: The Past as Prologue* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 2017) 77.

² U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, Joint Publication 1 (Washington DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, July 12, 2017), Ch III.

³ Ibid, xv.

⁴ Joseph Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (Cambridge, Mass: Perseus. Books, 2004), 32.

self-censorship while compelling behavior at home and manipulate opinion abroad.⁵ A good example is the Belt and Road Initiative in which China combines the benefits of a strong narrative and economic success to advance its strategic interests, including expanding its diplomatic influence, securing natural resources, promoting the international use of its currency, and gaining a relative advantage over the U.S.⁶ If not matched by comprehensive, operational targeting efforts, not only will China continue to make strategic gains at the expense of U.S. interests, the U.S. will be unable to exploit opportunities associated with these sharp power techniques. Moreover, China is likely to encounter exploitable economic and political difficulties in the future due to limits of its existing growth model and the inherent instability of authoritarian rule. A comprehensive targeting approach applies a degree of rigor towards the Chinese threat that will complement existing efforts to provide the GCC Commander with increased decision space to exploit strategic opportunities with operational actions. The U.S. strategy cannot rely upon the assumption that China will collapse or democratize before it achieves its hegemonic aspirations in the Pacific region, so the synchronization of U.S. targeting efforts at the operational level is critical to the U.S. ability to limit the effectiveness of these Chinese objectives.

⁵ Joseph Nye, "China's soft and sharp power." *The Strategist*, 8 January 2018, https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/chinas-soft-sharp-power/?utm_source=RC+Defense+Morning+Recon&utm_campaign=ae4a0e0006-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_01_07&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_694f73a8dc-ae4a0e0006-84063769. (accessed 2 Feb 2017).

⁶ Brahma Chellaney, "Chinese Creditor Imperialism." *Project Syndicate: The World's Opinion Page*, 20 Dec 2017, <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/china-sri-lanka-hambantota-port-debt-by-brahma-chellaney-2017-12> (accessed 13 February, 2018).

Today's interdependent global economy and globally interconnected information channels create opportunities and challenges associated with the U.S. worldwide presence and its relationship with China. U.S. economic strength is vital to its ability to project military and diplomatic power throughout the world, and the economic relationships with other nations created by that power promote shared interests that might otherwise not exist. Operational targeting efforts inclusive of economic expertise will inform and enhance the utility of the lines of communication between the U.S. and China caused by their economic relations. Additionally, the tensions associated with these economic relationships can be identified and mitigated at the operational level while influencing strategic decisions within the economic instrument of power.

Increased global activity in the space and cyber domains of warfare increases the complexity of strategy development and provides opportunities for other nations to offset the military superiority of the U.S. Combined with increased capacity in the air, land, and sea domains, space and cyber activities have transcended the geographic boundaries established by the UCP. Access to these domains has increased the global reach of many nations and organizations and has paved the way for some to challenge the global leadership status of the U.S. China's long-term commitment to develop its own space and cyber capabilities has established China as a main threat to the U.S. in those domains, both in the Pacific and worldwide.⁷ Further, its comprehensive policy development apparatus, fueled by Xi Jinping's autocratic ability to inspire and fuel the "China Dream", has led to its rise as a global leader in these areas due to the centralized control of

⁷ Aaron Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia* (New York: W W Norton and Company, 2011), 222-223.

dedicated research and development efforts.⁸ Operational targeting efforts in these domains are poised for development, and the U.S. response to China's rise in the space and cyber domains directly impacts its ability to maintain a leadership role in global stability and security.

While not seeking a direct military confrontation with the U.S., China is using their growing hard power by exploiting a “grey zone” where aggression and coercion work just below the level that would risk military confrontation with the U.S. China conducts activities in internationally disputed waters, supported by military technologies invented by the U.S., such as long-range precision-strike and electromagnetic-spectrum warfare, to raise the cost of intervention against them while aiming to push U.S. naval forces past where they can safely project power in the East and South China Sea.⁹ Being both postured and willing to secure U.S. interests by the employment of military force remains a requirement and possibility. The synchronization efforts discussed in this paper will yield more timely, comprehensive responses to military threats and provide U.S. decision makers with more informed decision space regarding China's unpredictable actions, as well as informing a grand strategy that holds up against accidents, contingencies, and the randomness of human affairs.¹⁰

⁸ Steven W. Mosher, *Bully of Asia: Why China's Dream Is the New Threat to World Order* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 2017), 31-32.

⁹ Economist, “The next war: The growing danger of great power conflict,” January 26, 2018, https://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21735586-how-shifts-technology-and-geopolitics-are-renewing-threat-growing-danger?utm_source=RC+Defense+Morning+Recon&utm_campaign=251f4c8dfd-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_01_26&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_694f73a8dc-251f4c8dfd-85376585 (accessed 17 February 2018).

¹⁰ Eliot A. Cohen, *The Big Stick: The Limits of Soft Power & the Necessity of Military Force* (New York: Basic Books, 2016), 205.

Assessments of China's long-term strategy drives many of the operational decisions made at PACOM. Due to the Chinese commitment to deception and opaqueness, their true intentions can be difficult to identify and assess. Additionally, China assesses the U.S. permanent military presence in the Pacific as an effort to keep them from assuming a leadership role, which challenges its historical role as the traditional hegemon in the region.¹¹ That prompts the Chinese WOG approach to strategy development that generates enduring tension and likely conflicts between the U.S. global and PACOM theater strategies and Chinese strategies.¹² A detailed analysis of China's national targeting methodologies, with an emphasis on how they support the objectives of their long-term strategy, will yield more options regarding PACOM strategy development, as well as more options to effectively assess the true intentions of China's existing strategies and plans. This analysis generated by PACOM assessment efforts transcends geographic boundaries and the operational assessments from the targeting process will inform U.S. global integration efforts. In today's resource constrained environment, this type of efficiency and dual-benefit of operational efforts will contribute greatly to the U.S. maintaining a strategic edge over competitors such as China.

Recommendations:

In addition to conceptual and procedural refinements to the existing Joint Targeting Process, the scope expansions discussed in this paper will require more professional development of targeting SMEs. These SMEs will be responsible for educating non-military members who can contribute to the comprehensive targeting

¹¹ Henry Kissinger, *World Order* (New York: Penguin Press, 2014), 229.

¹² Mosher, 23.

approach, which includes a civilian familiarization with the process that takes the sensitivity off the word *target*. Elements of the Joint Targeting Process are ideally suited to developing and executing more effective strategies, and the stakes are too high to limit U.S. options due to semantics. Additionally, to mirror China's comprehensive approach, military targeting experts must have a firm grasp of national strategic objectives, the GCC respective global campaign plans, and all the national assets that can contribute to their respective targeting efforts. Expanded understanding of the existing targeting process within the GCCs is required to leverage the resident expertise, and the increase of a peacetime focus can provide more opportunities for this education. To maximize the benefits of studying the Chinese example, the U.S. PME system should consider the integration of the existing targeting system within its study of the strategic and operational level of war.

In addition to some cultural reluctance for non-military experts to participate in *targeting*, high classification levels associated with most target development limits who can legally contribute to the comprehensive approach. While there is a time and place for protection of access to information, it is time to consider an unclassified forum to augment current GCC targeting efforts. While challenging due to restrictions associated with information technology and manpower limitations, this effort will facilitate the inclusion of those SMEs, without a security clearance, that are required for a more comprehensive targeting approach. This can also increase interoperability with non-military organizations, such as DoS, that routinely operate in the unclassified realm. Taking the approach discussed in the paper will offset the impact of stove-piped space and cyber development efforts, facilitate required integration earlier in the process and

more frequently throughout implementation. The inclusion of economic experts will enhance the timely targeting of vulnerabilities associated with Chinese economic, soft power efforts. Additionally, the required relationships and communication at the highest levels will foster a more holistic understanding of the environment (Network Analysis) and provide the GCC decision makers with more refined MOEs.

These MOEs can facilitate the alignment of U.S. targeting objectives with Chinese targeting objectives and inform the alignment of U.S. National Security Strategy with Chinese long-term security objectives. This development within the PACOM targeting process will effectively align future PACOM theater strategies to address Chinese targeting objectives, as well as increase ally and partner involvement in its regional targeting effort. To achieve the desired effects of U.S. targeting efforts, we must account for local politics, history and culture when attempting to apply a global strategy to various regions of the world. Each target considered in the existing process includes that rigor of analysis, so expanding the targeting scope to include more WOG input will augment the existing focus in those areas.

Addressing the classification levels to increase SME inclusion in the targeting process will also facilitate more involvement and input from U.S. partners. In addition to benefitting from cultural expertise provided by its international partners, their involvement in the GCC Targeting Process will reinforce their actual strength, self-confidence, and ability to work together while combating Chinese initiatives in their respective region.¹³ Many U.S. partners have a greater understanding of Chinese

¹³ Cohen, 114.

intentions than the U.S., and they can provide more accurate assessments regarding the effectiveness of both Chinese and U.S. smart power efforts. Additionally, this interoperability can be tested and enhanced during the conduct of international training exercises. While partner access will have to be balanced with other GCC security priorities, the consideration of all U.S. partnerships during every targeting decision is a vital step towards doing the right things in support of U.S. national objectives while exploiting U.S. soft power advantages.

Armed with the right expertise, augmenting the existing targeting process with soft power considerations can exploit opportunities to gain strategic advantages over China. Even with its spread of Confucius Institutes and Chinese culture throughout the world, China's infancy in "people-to-people" diplomacy offers a targeting opportunity for the U.S..¹⁴ With its sustained global presence, economic and military might, and commitment to individual liberties, democracy, and universal human rights, dedicated soft-power targeting efforts can both strengthen U.S. partnerships, as well as compel China to become a responsible actor throughout the world. As previously discussed, the inconsistencies between Chinese regional and global expansion and its "peaceful development" message has many potential partners uncertain how a relationship with China will benefit both parties.¹⁵ Additionally, recent comments from the 19th Party Congress has many wondering how China plans on implanting their proposed "global

¹⁴ Paul, Goble, "China's 'Soft Power' in Central Asia both More and Less than it Appears.", Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 15 Issue: 14, 30 January 2018, <https://jamestown.org/program/chinas-soft-power-central-asia-less-appears/> (accessed 11 Feb 2018).

¹⁵ Micheal, Swaine, "Chinese Views of Foreign Policy in the 19th Party Congress," China Leadership Monitor, Winter, Issue 55, 23 January 2018, <https://www.hoover.org/research/chinese-views-foreign-policy-19th-party-congress> (accessed 10 Feb 2018).

governance solutions.”¹⁶ With this uncertainty surrounding Chinese intentions, the soft power integration within the existing targeting process can result in GCC targeting objectives, informed by increased fidelity regarding true Chinese intentions, that directly support the increase in U.S. soft power.

With the post-Cold War world trending towards multipolarity and the U.S. vital interests being challenged throughout the world by multiple competitors, it is vital that U.S. grand strategy efforts effectively leverage all instruments of its national power to maximize the efficient use of limited national resources. Current synchronization efforts at the national level will likely yield long-term positive results, but more immediate, bottom up refinement within the current GCC structure can also enhance those national level efforts. Studying China’s example of strategic coherence and how it comprehensively applies all elements of its national power in support of an effective long-term strategy, the operational level can refine their existing targeting process to support theater-level strategy development and operationalize national strategy efforts in their respective AOs. These refinements, combined with some culture adjustments, can be implemented immediately and applied during peace time to operationalize the pursuit of national objectives. The rise of China as a competitor and increased complexities associated with today’s global environment is not a valid reason for failing to achieve U.S. national interests. Operational targeting efforts will not only inform theater strategy, they will provide more clear, coherent avenues to more synchronized U.S. strategy development.

¹⁶Swaine.

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- Cohen, Eliot A. *The Big Stick: The Limits of Soft Power & the Necessity of Military Force*. New York: Basic Books, 2016. The author emphasizes the importance of maintaining a capable military (hard power) to increase the effectiveness of soft power elements. Chapter four of this book is focused on China as a main threat to U.S. global power. The discussion regarding potential Chinese vulnerabilities and the hard power contribution to vital U.S. partnerships served as a valuable augmentation to my research efforts.

- Economist, "The next war: The growing danger of great power conflict."
https://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21735586-how-shifts-technology-and-geopolitics-are-renewing-threat-growing-danger?utm_source=RC+Defense+Morning+Recon&utm_campaign=251f4c8dfd-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_01_26&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_694f73a8dc-251f4c8dfd-85376585 (accessed 17 February 2018)
- Friedberg, Aaron. *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia*. New York: W W Norton and Company, 2011. Provides a historical and modern analysis of the United States and China relationship that offers a point of origin for many of China's targeting objectives.
- Frankopan, Peter. *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World*. New York: Alford A Knopf, 2016. This book's exploration of the existing and potential trade routes that create economic ties between many of the world powers provides insight into potential Chinese targeting objectives in the region. The economic opportunities created by China's expansion also create security challenges that impact the role and development of the PLA. Not specifically covered in this book, but the background of the developments provides vital connections to other research regarding China's development of comprehensive national power.
- Gertz, Bill. "Secret Document Reveals China Covertly Offering Missiles, Increased Aid to North Korea." *The Washington Free Beacon*. 2 January 2018.
http://freebeacon.com/national-security/secret-document-reveals-china-covertly-offering-missiles-increased-aid-north-korea/?utm_source=RC+Defense+Morning+Recon&utm_campaign=de8afa1178-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_01_03&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_694f73a8dc-de8afa1178-84063769 (accessed 2 Jan 2018).
- Goble, Paul. "China's 'Soft Power' in Central Asia both More and Less than it Appears." *Eurasia Daily Monitor* Volume: 15 Issue: 14. 30 January 2018.
<https://jamestown.org/program/chinas-soft-power-central-asia-less-appears/> (accessed 11 Feb 2018).
- Gray, Colin S. *Fighting Talk: Forty Maxims on War, Peace, and Strategy*. Westport, CT: Potomac Books, Inc, 2007. A renowned strategic theorist, the author provides 40 summaries of his main thoughts regarding strategy and its connection to both War and Peace. His emphasis on Peace drove my thesis' focus on peacetime targeting.
- Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996. This seminal work provides analysis on the potential causes of conflict throughout the world. The author's emphasis on a new world order that is not effectively managed by the post WWII Westphalian system provides critical perspectives on the challenges associated with the U.S. (and potentially China) hegemonic responsibilities. During the Cold War, two superpowers defined the global relationships, but the U.S. is now faced with the

rise of culturally based behavior that complicates its strategy development efforts. The author discusses the spread of “Chineseness” that depicts how China is leveraging its cultural ties with other Asian nations in support of its own regional and global strategies. This book’s depiction of a culturally based world reinforces the requirement to integrate all instruments of national power within our existing targeting process.

Interorganizational Coordination During Joint Operations, Joint Publication 3-08
(Washington DC: The Joint Staff, 2004), p. xiii.

Jimmy A. Gomez, “The Targeting Process: D3A and F3EAD.” *Small Wars Journal*. July 2011, 1-16. This article offers a full-spectrum approach that combines the utility of the deliberate D3A planning tool and the F3EAD execution tool in response to the dynamic threats on today’s battlefields.

John Bilas, “Targeting the JIIM Way: A More Inclusive Approach.” *Joint Forces Quarterly*. 2nd Qtr 2014, 60-67. This article provides a summary of our current Joint Doctrine’s shortfall regarding the agencies which should be contributing to a whole of government targeting process. The emphasis on complete integration of the JIIM partners in planning and execution is a catalyst for my research.

Kaplan, Robert. *Monsoon: The Indian Ocean and the Future of American Power*. New York: Random House, 2010. This book provides analysis and evidence of the intersection of national interests in the Indian Ocean region between the U.S. and China. The author’s discussion of Chinese “protection vs. projection” and the historical roots of Chinese presence in the region provide insight into their targeting objectives.

Kissinger, Henry. *World Order*. New York: Penguin Press, 2014. This book provides historical analysis on the balance of power relationships that contribute to a world order. In his analysis, the author provides insight into the issues that led to disruptions in the balance of power, as well as relevant links to contemporary issues. Chapter 6 of this book focuses on the origins and challenges associated with the U.S. and China relationship. The author poses the question of whether the U.S./China relationship will be confrontational or based on a solid partnership. While my thesis will not address that question directly, the answer is directly tied to the targeting objectives that will be discussed.

Kissinger, Henry. *On China*. New York: Penguin Group, 2012. The author examines how China has approached diplomacy, strategy, and negotiation throughout its history and reflects on the global consequences for the global balance of power in the 21st century.

Kornberg, Judith F. and John R. FaU.S.t. *China World Politics: Policies, Processes, Prospects*: Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishing, 2005. This book discusses Deng Xiaoping’s Four Modernization concepts and provides

connections to China's current policies. Additionally, the authors discuss China's view on a post-Cold War world order and their role in its development. Insight into China's geopolitical relationships with other world actors also augments the research efforts of this thesis.

Marks, Ramon. "Coming to Grips With a Rising China." *Real Clear Defense*. 4 January 2018.
https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2018/01/04/coming_to_grips_with_a_rising_china_112858.html?utm_source=RC+Defense+Morning+Recon&utm_campaign=245def8b17-MAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_01_03&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_694f73a8dc-245def8b17-84063769 (accessed 5 Jan 2018).

Mosher, Steven W. *Bully of Asia: Why China's Dream Is the New Threat to World Order*. Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 2017. This book provides depth to the historical and cultural origin of the vision and policies of current Chinese leaders. The author provides alternative perspectives to the true intentions of Chinese activities throughout the world, and his discussion of potential Chinese vulnerabilities provides specific examples that can be tied directly to this thesis.

Murray, Williamson. *America and the Future of War: The Past as Prologue*. Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 2017. This book reinforces the importance of studying history to provide insight into the behaviors of potential adversaries and partners. The author provides specific "trouble spots" in Appendix A that includes specific discussions regarding China's perceived role in the post-Cold War world.

Nye, Joseph S. "China's soft and sharp power." *The Strategist*. 8 January 2018.
https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/chinas-soft-sharp-power/?utm_source=RC+Defense+Morning+Recon&utm_campaign=ae4a0e0006-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_01_07&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_694f73a8dc-ae4a0e0006-84063769. (2 Feb 2017). Author expands upon his soft power classic by discussing the use of "sharp power" by authoritarian government to influence partnerships and domestic sentiment. This article sheds light on vulnerabilities associated with those techniques used by China.

Nye, Joseph S. Jr. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. Cambridge, Mass: Perseus. Books, 2004. This seminal work introduces the concept of smart power as the synergistic management and application of a nation's soft and hard power. The author speculates on China's increase of soft power influence around the world and his work is cited by many China scholars when referencing China's modern approach to its own global power.

Paul H.B. Godwin, "China's Defense Establishment: The Hard Lessons of Incomplete Modernization," in Laurie Burkitt, Andrew Scobell, and Larry M. Wortzel (eds.),

The Lessons of History: The Chinese People's Liberation Army at 75, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute 2003. This work provides analysis regarding the PLA's implementation of lessons learned from its first 75 years in existence. I expect this perspective on the progress China has made in the past 14 years to focus my research.

Pham, Tuan. "The United States Has Not Lost the South China Sea." *The Diplomat*. 1 September 2017. http://thediplomat.com/2017/09/the-united-states-has-not-lost-the-south-china-sea/?utm_source=RC+Defense+Morning+Recon&utm_campaign=66317c237a-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_08_31&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_694f73a8dc-66317c237a-84063769 . (31 August 2017). This work highlights a "migration" from a policy of accommodation (cooperative) to one of balancing (competitive) posture due to Beijing's forceful behavior despite repeated U.S. overtures and deference to Chinese national interests. Understanding Chinese WOG targeting objectives in the SCS, such as those highlighted in this article, can facilitate the development of WOG objectives by the U.S.

Pillsbury, Michael. *The Hundred-Year Marathon: China's Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2015. The author's credentials and inside perspective on Chinese policy served as one of the most valuable references in support of my thesis. U.S. policy makers and strategy developers are challenged with the opaqueness of Chinese efforts, and the author provides some transparency. This insight can be directly tied to the existing Joint Targeting Process to gain more fidelity on the true intent of Chinese activities.

Saunders, Phillip C, and Andrew Scobell. *PLA Influence on China's National Security Policymaking*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2015. This book provides critical analysis regarding the relationship regarding the PLA and the PRC. The role of the PLA in response to recent Chinese security issues provides insight into China's whole of government approach to its national security policy making. Also, the book provides valuable perspectives regarding recent appointment decisions by Xi Jinping.

Smith, General Rupert. *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World*. New York: Vintage Books, 2008. The author's emphasis on the distinction between employment and deployment are used to describe the modern-day applications of hard power in support of soft power goals such as assurance, deterrence, coercion, and compellence. Additionally, the author's focus on coherence between the means and ends of a strategy can be tied directly to the development of targeting objectives that contribute directly to the political purpose.

Spence, Jonathan D. *The Search for Modern China*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999. 705-725. This work provides a detailed historical background that explores the origins of "Modern China" based off a pre-2000 vantage point. The author's 2nd Edition captures the developments in China during the 1990s.

Specific to my research is the author's account of the Chinese government's delicate management of the Socialist fundamentals of the Party while faced with a worldwide intrigue with Capitalism. Additionally, this book discusses the impact of the hegemonic transition from the Soviet Union to the United States and serves as a starting point for my thesis.

Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College. *Strategic Theory for the 21st Century: The Little Book on Big Strategy*, by Harry R. Yarger. Strategic Studies Institute. Carlisle, PA, 2006. This publication serves as a foundational reference regarding the art and science of strategy development and application. Additionally, the author's strategic framework contributed to my current framework and can be tied directly to the thesis' discussion on whole of government approach to strategy development and targeting in support of that development.

Swaine, Michael D. "Chinese Views of Foreign Policy in the 19th Party Congress." *China Leadership Monitor*. Winter, Issue 55. 23 January 2018. <https://www.hoover.org/research/chinese-views-foreign-policy-19th-party-congress> (accessed 10 Feb 2018).

Tanner, Murray S. and Peter W. Mackenzie. *China's Emerging National Security Interests: and their Impact on the People's Liberation Army*. Arlington and Quantico, VA: CNA and Marine Corps University Press, 2015. This book provides very direct assessments regarding the U.S./China security interdependence, the new security challenges associated with the expanded PLA role in the world, and China's active defense policy. Regarding China's comprehensive approach to national power referenced by other Chinese scholars, this book offers very strong examples of the connections between the M and other instruments of Chinese power.

Tse, Don and Larry Ong. "Trump's National Security Strategy a Timely Counter to China's Expansionism." *Real Clear Defense*. 4 January 2018. https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2018/01/04/trumps_national_security_strategy_a_timely_counter_to_chinas_expansionism_112857.html?utm_source=RC+Defense+Morning+Recon&utm_campaign=245def8b17-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_01_03&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_694f73a8dc-245def8b17-84063769 (accessed 4 Jan 2018).

U.S. Department of State. Policy Planning Staff Memorandum. "The inauguration of organized political warfare" (*May 4, 1948*), by George F. Kennan. C. Thomas Thorne, Jr., and David S. Patterson (Eds.), *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1945–1950, Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment*, Washington: Department of State/Government Printing Office 1996, pp. 668-72 (document available at: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frUS.1945-50Intel/d269>).

U.S. Joint Chief of Staff. *National Military Strategy* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, February 2015), 1-29. Due to the SECRET classification of the more recent 2017 NMS, this document provides the foundation for my research regarding the U.S. Military Strategy.

U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*. Joint Publication 1. Washington DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, July 12, 2017. As the capstone publication for all joint doctrine, it presents fundamental principles and overarching guidance for the employment of the U.S. Armed Forces. The publication serves as the foundation for my discussion on the U.S. instruments of power with an emphasis on how the military instrument can act in isolation in today's complex security environment. This publication also serves as a primary reference for the Unified Command Plan.

U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. *Joint Targeting*. Joint Publication 3-60. Washington DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, January 31, 2013. This publication outlines the doctrinal procedures for targeting at the Joint level. It serves as a reference for existing procedures and the starting point when discussing potential areas of improvement. My research is centered around the gaps created by an overreliance on this document.

U.S. President, *National Security Strategy* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, February 2015), 1-29. The NSS provides the foundation for my recommendations. All WOG targeting objectives must be nested within the NSS. Additionally, this is a commonly read document by national level leaders that I can use to offset potential terminology barriers associated with my research.

U.S. President, *National Security Strategy* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, December 2017), 1-55. Published near the end of my research efforts, this NSS provides the Trump Administration's strategy on how to regain and maintain U.S. strength in the world. With a focus on "American Prosperity" each of the comprehensive targeting concepts discussed in this paper support the achievement of security objectives laid out by the President. As the starting point for commonality amongst the proposed participants of a more comprehensive targeting approach, this document must be studied and clearly understood by all military targeteers.

Waldron, Arthur. "There Is No Thucydides Trap." *supchina*. 12 June 2017. supchina.com/2017/06/12/no-thucydides-trap/. (accessed 1 Feb 2018). This article provides a book review of Allison's *Destined for War*. The main point of the review is that the U.S. and China are not destined for war.

Ye, Zicheng, *Inside China's Grand Strategy: The Perspective from the People's Republic*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2011. A translation from of a leading Chinese scholar in International Relations, this book focuses on China's grand strategy of a peaceful development both domestically and

internationally. The book highlights China's view on comprehensive national power and provides perspective on how China utilizes that power in its relationships with the U.S., Russia, Japan, and other nations. Additionally, the author provides insight into the challenges associated with a peaceful Sino-U.S. relationship, as well as how internal political and social development will be the key to an eventual Chinese unification with Taiwan.

Zhu, Zhiquan. *China's New Diplomacy: Rationale, Strategies and Significance*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2010. 1-16. This book highlights China's utilization of great power diplomacy, energy diplomacy, and public diplomacy to develop its version of 'smart power'. China's "comprehensive national power" depicted in this book provides examples of integrated DIME approaches that utilize both a top-down and bottom-up methodology to facilitate China's image as a 'peacefully rising, responsible power.' The book provides detailed examples of China's diplomatic efforts throughout the world through the end of the 20th century and provides analysis on what the next century will bring.

Vita

Lieutenant Colonel Stoutenborough is a native of Illinois and a 1993 graduate of Millikin University. Upon enlisting in the Marine Corps in September 1993, he attended recruit training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego, California. After completing Marine Combat Training, he was a student at the Financial Management School in Camp Johnson, North Carolina. After serving as a Disbursing Clerk for 12 months as a member of 3d FSSG in Okinawa, Lieutenant Colonel Stoutenborough was accepted for the Enlisted Commissioning Program.

A career Artillery/Fires Officer, LtCol Stoutenborough has served as a Forward Observer, AXO/Guns Platoon Commander, FDO, and Battalion S-4 while serving in 1st Battalion, 12th Marines. He served as a Platoon Commander and Company Commander at Marine Barracks, 8th and I in Washington, D.C. He served as the Inspector-Instructor for Battery D, 2nd Battalion, 14th Marines. He served as the Battalion XO for 2nd Battalion, 11th Marines, the Commanding Officer, HQ Battery, 11th Marines, and the Assistant Operations Officer for 5th Marine Regiment and 11th Marine Regiment. He served as a Faculty Advisor and Division Head at the Marine Corps Expeditionary Warfare School. He served as the Targeting Officer for II Marine Expeditionary Force and as the Battalion Commander for 2d Battalion, 10th Marines. His most recent assignment was as a Faculty Advisor and Leadership Department Head at the Marine Corps Command and Staff College.

He has deployed to Okinawa in support of the Unit Deployment Program, to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as a Provisional Military Policeman, a Military Advisor, and the RCT-5 Iraqi Security Forces Coordinator, and to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom as the Targeting Officer for RC-SW (II MEF FWD).

LtCol Stoutenborough holds a Master of Arts in Military Studies from the U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College; a Master of Arts in Business Management from Webster University; and a Bachelor of Science in Marketing from Millikin University.

Lieutenant Colonel Stoutenborough's personal decorations include the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal with 3 Gold Stars in lieu of fourth award, Navy Marine Corps Commendation Medal with Gold Star in lieu of second award, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, and Combat Action Ribbon.